

Legislative Bulletin.....May 2, 2007

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H.R. 1867 — National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2007

H.R. 1867, the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2007 (sponsored by Rep. Baird, D-WA), is scheduled to be considered on the House floor today, May 2, 2007, subject to a structured rule ([H.Res. 350](#)), allowing one motion to recommit with instructions. Below is a summary of amendments preprinted in the Congressional Record. Amendments are debatable for 10 minutes, unless otherwise noted. Note: Summaries are based on RSC staff's review of *actual amendment text*. For a summary of the underlying bill, see a separate RSC document released earlier in the week.

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Honda (D-CA). Requires NSF to, as part of Informal Science Education activities, “support activities to create informal educational materials, exhibits, and multimedia presentations relevant to global warming, climate science, and greenhouse gas reduction strategies.” In addition, the amendment would require NSF, as part of Discovery Research K-12 activities, to “support the development of educational materials relevant to global warming, climate science, and greenhouse gas reduction strategies.”

Price (R-GA). Applies PAYGO to the provisions in H.R. 1867, requiring all spending in the bill to be offset by decreasing spending elsewhere. Specifically, the amendment states, “No authorization of appropriations made by this Act or other provision of this Act that results in costs to the Federal Government shall be effective except to the extent that this Act provides for offsetting decreases in spending of the Federal Government, such that the net effect of this Act does not either increase the Federal deficit or reduce the Federal surplus.”

McNerney (D-CA). Directs NSF to create a new program to give grants to Hispanic-serving institutions to enhance the quality of undergraduate science, math, engineering, and technology education at these institutions. **Some conservatives may be concerned that this amendment would create a new program, and is duplicative of current efforts.** An October 2005 Government Accountability Office (GAO) study reported that in FY04, 13 federal agencies reported spending roughly \$2.8 billion on 207 different education programs directly related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Campbell (R-CA). Reduces the overall authorizations for the bill by 1% (from \$20.97 billion to \$20.76 billion).

Campbell (R-CA). Prohibits funds in the bill from being used to fund the following types of research projects related to:

- The archives of Andean Knotted- String Records
- the accuracy in the cross-cultural understanding of others' emotions
- bison hunting on the late prehistoric Great Plains
- team verses individual play
- sexual politics of waste in Dakar, Senegal
- social relationships and reproductive strategies of Phayre's Leaf Monkeys
- cognitive model of superstitious belief

According to NSF's website, these research projects each received federal NSF grants. According to the sponsor's office, "these types of research projects are not central to the mission of NSF, and are research activities that should not be funded by the American taxpayers."

Ehlers (R-MI). Inserts the following sense of Congress regarding the math and science partnership programs of the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation:

- "although the mathematics and science education partnership program at the National Science Foundation and the mathematics and science partnership program at the Department of Education practically share the same name, the 2 programs are intended to be complementary, not duplicative;
- "the National Science Foundation partnership programs are innovative, model reform initiatives that move promising ideas in education from research into practice to improve teacher quality, develop challenging curricula, and increase student achievement in mathematics and science, and Congress intends that the National Science Foundation peer-reviewed partnership programs found to be effective should be put into wider practice by dissemination through the Department of Education partnership programs; and
- "the Director of the National Science Foundation and the Secretary of Education should have ongoing collaboration to ensure that the 2 components of this priority effort for mathematics and science education continue to work in concert for the benefit of States and local practitioners nationwide."

Flake (R-AZ). Strikes section 6 of the bill, which creates a new demonstration program, which would award one year grants to individuals to assist them in improving research proposals previously submitted, but rejected, by NSF. According to the sponsor's office, "regardless of whether or not you believe it is the proper role of the federal government to fund scientific research, it is wasteful to spend taxpayer money on a program that helps individuals qualify for more taxpayer money."

Matsui (D-CA). Directs NSF to provide "grant supplements to institutions receiving grants under the Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship program, to be used to train graduate students in the communication of the substance and importance of their research to nonscientist audience, including policymakers." Also directs NSF to report to Congress on how the

communication activities have been implemented, including the number of students trained and the number and size of grant supplements awarded. **Some conservatives may be concerned that this amendment would create a new grant program.**

Weldon (R-FL). Inserts provisions into the authorization section that would require that the total amount authorized under each section could not exceed the amount actually appropriated for NSF for FY 2007 if:

- the total amount appropriated for NASA for FY 2008 is less than \$17.3 billion;
- the total amount appropriated for NASA Exploration Systems for FY 2008 is less than \$3.9 billion; or
- the total amount appropriated for NASA Space Operations for FY 2008 is less than \$6.8 billion.

Also would require that the total amount authorized under each section could not exceed the amount actually appropriated for NSF for FY 2009 if:

- the total amount appropriated for NASA for FY 2008 is less than \$17.6 billion;
- the total amount appropriated for NASA Exploration Systems for FY 2008 is less than \$4.3 billion; or
- the total amount appropriated for NASA Space Operations for FY 2008 is less than \$6.7 billion.

Garrett (R-NJ). Reduces the overall authorizations for the bill by 0.5%.

Garrett (R-NJ). Prohibits funds in the bill from being used to fund the following types of research projects:

- the reproductive aging and symptom experience at midlife among Bangladeshi Immigrants, Sedentees, and White London Neighbors; and
- the diet and social stratification in ancient Puerto Rico.

According to the sponsor's office, the amendment is designed to prevent "overly-specific research that is of little benefit to Americans in general."

Kirk (R-IL). Requires NSF to solicit proposals for annual research on mercury levels in each of the Great Lakes, with details on the trend and source of mercury in the water levels and aquatic life.

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